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JANUARY 1st, 1850.

CURIOSITIES OF MUSICAL HISTORY.

No. II.

Contributed by E. HOLMES, Author of the "Life of Mozart."

It is difficult to picture to ourselves the condition of human existence before the invention of printing. After the cathedrals and abbeys had been raised, in all the magnificence of Gothic design and profusion of quaint architectural fancies,

"With many a mason-devil's groan,"

the poor fraters had, for the most part, nought to do except to keep their hours, tell their beads, recite their breviaries, eat, drink, and sleep. The struggle and contest with life, unfilled by any proportionate object, awaken pity; and it is not without some secret sympathy that we still read old Gower's description of an over-grown monk, sitting alone, resting his unwieldy bulk in the stony cloisters of his monastery. These verses, preserved in Warton's History of Poetry, are intended as a satire on indolence and gluttony; but if ever self-indulgence wanted an excuse, it may be best allowed in an age barren of literature and intellectual resources. Now, many of us are kept virtuous in spite of ourselves: each day requires attention to such a multiplicity of affairs, that we have no leisure to develop any splendid criminality, and instead of feeling the burden of time, the present danger is that we may die without knowing that we have ever lived.

While the "enemy" time was so busy, and none of our present admirable means of killing him, through the morning and evening papers, &c., even dreamed of, there must have been a great opening for the professors of amusement. Such were the ancient minstrels, the lineal predecessors of our present secular musicians,—the pleasant fellows of their day, who united the talents of the poet, the musician, the buffoon, and the conjuror. We doubt whether Paul Bedford or Wright, though they may be able to sing forty songs, and tell as many stories, know how to "circle an egg, bleed a cat, blow beef, or cover a house with omelets." Such, however, were some of the elegant arts in which minstrels originally excelled. They also understood how to make amorous girdles, and delivered letters or messages for lovers, "teaching them the pink of courtesy and flower of compliments, and how to ornament their persons in the most emphatic manner." "I am not," exclaims a minstrel, "one of those fellows who can only take off a cat, play the fool or drunkard, or talk nonsense; but a true and genuine troubadour, who invent everything I say."

Some of the offices performed by these people were so ignominious, that their proper designation must be spared to "ears polite:" but though musicians and actors still suffer a traditional bad character, it is certain that, in many respects, we are decidedly improved. It is easy to perceive what depravation of morals must have been extended by persons of idle and dissolute habits, professed voluptuaries, who, as the only living volumes of amusement, found easy access at the tables of the great, and familiar intercourse with ladies; and as, in process of time, minstrels began to swarm, many edicts were issued to restrain their licentiousness. In the reign of Edward the Second, they had become a kind of bull beggars: highly fed and richly clothed, they began to hector over and insult their entertainer if they were dissatisfied with his presents and rewards. The old author of the *Fabliau de la Rose vermeille*, attacks them in a fine indignant strain. He is of opinion that a man had better be a monk than a minstrel:—

"I would not own the wretch for kin
Who would the minstrel trade pursue;
He'd better dry shave head and chin,
And, with the hair, cut off the skin,
Than herd with such a worthless crew."

The numbers in which minstrels congregated on festive occasions, and particularly at grand nuptial and funeral celebrations, singing with equal ardour the praises of the living and the dead, is surprising; and their passion for finery was often gratified at the expense of the women themselves. When Lionel, Duke of Clarence, son of Edward the Third, espoused the daughter of the Duke of Milan, he bestowed five hundred superb dresses on the minstrels, musicians, and buffoons assembled, and his ducal father-in-law added many more.

About the same year, 1381, John of Gaunt, uncle of this Lionel, granted a privilege to the English minstrels at his castle of Tutbury, on the inauguration of their first king. Annually at the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, after mass, and a dinner for the occasion, the minstrels went to the abbey gate, where the Prior of Tutbury had a bull turned out to them, the said bull having his "horns cut off, his ears crompt, his tail cut by the stumple, his body smeared over with soap, and his nose blown full of beaten pepper; in short, being made as mad as it was possible for him to be." All men were solemnly enjoined not to come within forty feet of the bull, the minstrels excepted; who, if they could but detain him so long as to cut off some small matter of his hair, and bring the same to Mercat Cross, were entitled to possess the bull; but if he got over the river into Derbyshire, he reverted to his original owners. What tender sportive grace hovered about the cradle of infant melody! Dr. Plot, the historian of Staffordshire, tells us that

the custom was continued in his time, 1680, and that he heard the vicar read divine service, choosing psalms and lessons *appropriate to the occasion*—(we hope not to the docking, soaping, and peppering). The Psalms, when he attended, “were the 98th, 149th, and 150th; the First Lesson, 2nd Chron. v., and the Second the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians.” Imagine this edifying introduction to the spectacle, and Dr. Plot, in a powdered wig, sitting with great solemnity in the family pew. No elaboration of modern farce equals in exquisite absurdity some of the formal facts of history.*

After a while, so many people unqualified by musical genius took part in these bull-runnings, that their original foundation was entirely overlooked, and they passed among the diversions of the mob. In our more civilized age, a bull is occasionally turned loose without preliminary notice, to encourage the old English art of knocking down and highway robbing. There is some reason, though not much morality, in this; but for John of Gaunt's bull there is no shadow of reason or excuse, and he will be utterly repudiated by the whole body of the musical public, as at all times, except in the shape of beef, alien to their taste and habits. Perhaps he was meant, in his “fine phrensy,” as a type of the great *ex-tempore* performer, of an unbounded vigour of style, attacking his subjects, inverting them, and diminishing them, as they “fled, and pursued transverse.” A florid fugue could scarcely be better personified.

The jocular, or minstrel, of William the Conqueror was rewarded with some good estates in Gloucestershire. Whether the Berdies are yet extant among the county families we know not, though some of our present great titles certainly claim no more illustrious origin. In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Henry the Third, it occurred to him to present Richard his harper, and Beatrice his wife, with a pipe of wine each. Hence, probably, the origin of the phrase, “drunk as a fiddler, a lord, or a piper,” and of those wild inconceivable legends preserved by Rabelais, of people who drank from the barrel-head.

Musing on the revolutions in music from distant ages, Burney makes the following reflection:—

“The first Greek musicians were gods; the second, heroes; the third, bards; the fourth, beggars. During the early times of music in every country, the wonders and affections of the people have been gained by surprise; but when musicians became numerous, and the art was regarded of easier acquirement, they lost their favour, and from being seated at the table of kings, and helped to the first cut, they were reduced to the most abject state.”

* The forte of Dr. Plot is in the dry narration of drolleries. No smile ever plays over his imperturbable features. It is he who tells how their “honours,” Cromwell's commissioners, were served at Woodstock, and how their “honours” beds were suddenly whisked up at night, and their “honours” heels placed perpendicularly over their heads; while sometimes their “honours” heard loud explosions, as of six demiculverins shot off at their bedside.

It is certainly true that,

“The less the public understand,
The more they admire the slight of hand.”

And if there were not something in lyrical history superior to fate and the vicissitudes of fortune, few of us would have the courage to review a gallery of our ancestors portrayed in their true costume and colours. But it gives us patience with all the boon companions and nameless jovial heroes of antiquity who lived by their songs and by their wits “from hand to mouth,” when their line terminates in a Mozart or Beethoven,—great self-denying men, whose works, now priceless beyond gold, did not shield their authors from the dreaded scourge of poverty. They had their reward, and these have theirs. As long as music was an individual and personal accomplishment, rarely understood, and only criticised in ignorance of its principles, it was of itself an ample fortune to those who love to live in ease and luxury, of which there are always a tolerable number; but since it has become an art, and been subjected to the opinions of the public, the gift of genius has been a very questionable boon. A composer, compelled to write according to his *ideal* and his conscience, cannot adapt himself to the current taste. It is melancholy that we even cannot help so deserving a man, should we happen to find him among a million. Death must come to his assistance, and prepare his niche in the gallery of immortal fame. In the course of thirty or forty years, we have seen the decline and downfall of so many celebrities, as to distrust the permanence of every reputation that has not survived many contests of opinion, and been submitted to the last infallible test—the care and affection of posterity. It is not much that a man's name should pass into a household word long after the composer himself is decomposed; but Milton, a great authority, confesses that this desire is the “infirmity of noble minds.”

As we cannot tell what tunes the old minstrels sung, or accompaniments they played, any more than what the songs were the syrens sung to Ulysses, which the antiquarian Sir Thomas Brown was so desirous to hear, we follow this subject of early secular music merely from its connection with Gothic manners and customs. At Christmas, any winter scene of Old England, its castles, battlements, and chivalry, with the festive hall in which “beards wag all,” is germane to the season, and adapted to the chimney-nook. Practical joking seems of equal antiquity and convenience. It still survives as an appendage to the legitimate drama; and when the old trio, harlequin, clown, and pantaloon, sprung before the lights on boxing-night, with the squeak, and the “Here we are;” pantaloon hobbling, the clown putting out his tongue, and harlequin's head performing its accustomed gyrations, the

audience regarded their fixed idea of merriment. To poke a friend in the ribs with a stick, when you are saying to him, "Ha, old fellow!" is still sanctioned as an authentic extempore pleasantry by the rules of genteel comedy. A sound smack on the back was thought so good a jest by country gentlemen in the time of the "Spectator," that Addison and Steele, who had probably winced under wit of this kind, tried to write it down. While so much of our practical wit remains stereotyped, we must excuse the minstrels who lived before the revival of letters if they were partly mountebanks.

Edward the Second, with the soft disposition of princes addicted to personal favourites, was sometimes inclined to melancholy, and it was thought desirable to make him laugh. Warton, among the curious memorials of his History of Poetry, shews that a person was one day introduced to him, who, performing a grotesque dance in the royal presence, *fit le roy grandement rire*. Another gentleman, or perhaps the same, is said to have ridden before the king, with a singular knack of tumbling off his horse. Such anecdotes transport us over centuries in the attempt to appreciate personal character. These tumblers and posture-masters were also doubtless harpers and singers. It is dangerous to dance before monarchs. Ogilvie, the first translator of Virgil, cutting some most extraordinary capers before James the First, so injured his leg that he went limping ever after. It was better that he should halt himself than make lame feet to his verses.

That there were minstrels more specially gifted as musicians and poets, and of a higher order in their faculty, than the miscellaneous adventurers of old times in all sorts of amusement, needs hardly be said. Blondel, whose fame comes down to us with King Richard, is one; and in the illuminated MS. of the poems of the King of Navarre, there is the figure of some respectable *Jongleur* (minstrel), seated on a high seat, performing to the king and queen.

The external features of resemblance between musicians past and present, affords an interesting subject of speculation; but melody itself, that latest invented and divine attribute of music, is in its origin full of mystery; for though there can be no more comparison between a melody of Rondel, or any other troubadour, and of Mozart, than between a Hottentot Venus and the Venus in the Florence Gallery, yet we find people in all ages talking of airs, as if they possessed Don Giovanni or Figaro, or the Andante to the *Sinfonia Pastorale*. It makes a well-rounded period to say, that "songs have at all times and in all places afforded amusement and consolation to mankind: every passion of the human breast has been vented in song, and the most savage as well as civilized inhabitants of the earth have

encouraged these effusions." But what was antique melody, and what suggested the old raptures? If the airs of Thibaut, King of Navarre, or of Blondel, or the Song on the Victory at Agincourt, were now performed in public, the audience would probably laugh and stare as much as they did at the Greek and Roman music, of which Mr. Bochsá some time ago produced specimens at his "Historical Concert." In poetry, we still subscribe to old Caxton's eulogium on Chaucer, viz., "that he comprehended hys maters in short, quick, and hie sentences, eschewing prolixity, castyng away the chaf of superfluytey, and shewyng the piked grain of sentence, uttered by crafty and sugred eloquence." Chaucer's allusions to music would apply to the best singers and compositions of the present day. The musicians in the pilgrimage to Canterbury are distinguished. The poor scholar has a gay *sautrie* (dulcimer)—

"On which he made on nightis melodie,
So swetely, that all the chambre rong,
And *Angelus ad Virginem* he song."

When the mendicant friar has done singing, his eyes twinkle in his head—

"As don the starres in a frosty night."

Chaucer's application of the powers of music in the Nun's tale of St. Cecilia, is full of the truth and tenderness of the great poet:

"And while that organs maden melody
To God alone thus in hir hert song she."

There is a turn in the expression almost more graceful and beautiful than music itself. The poet probably felt more than he heard; and the "vision and the faculty divine" enabled him prophetically to foretell the destiny of music, and to feel the future in the instant.

The Tigellius of Horace seems to have been a singer much in vogue at the fashionable parties in Rome. His descendants are still to be found among the petted favourites of the Italian Opera, who love to contemplate the agonies of disappointment which they create, when the physician's certificate suddenly proclaims their illness to the audience. Horace has gibbeted Tigellius for the edification of all posterity, and the indignant satirist includes *all* singers in his censure. The Roman tenor would not sing though Cæsar asked him; but when he began of his own accord, he sang *Io Bacche* in all keys, till people were sick of it and him.*

Theodoric the Goth was fonder of a song or single instrument, which calmed his mind, than of the "noise of hydraulic organs or the clangor of many voices and instruments in concert." Here we have the office and effect of modern

* The more we look into old songs, the more surprising it appears that singers always expected to be afflicted. It is curious that when Dante meets his old acquaintance Casella in the infernal regions, he woos him to sing. Milton's verse breathes a cool and refreshing air on their interview—"Met in the milder shades of purgatory."

melody on a person of taste and sensibility; but how Theodoric was calmed by such airs as were composed in his day may be an amusing riddle for Christmas.

We have heard that it is still a prevailing custom at the Coal-Hole in the Strand, to have what is called a "finish" after the theatres, with glee-singing, hot potations, and tobacco. Without entering into the merits of this custom, so long as gentlemen are used to "carry their liquor," it is surely better to unite Bacchus and Ceres with Apollo than with Mars, or any other deity who incites to scour the streets, and engage in conflicts with the new police. England once lost a good composer, Michael Wise, through a blow on the head which he got with a watchman's pole in a night row at Salisbury. Posterity must forgive him this one little escapade, considering the price he paid for it. A tendency to what is termed "keeping it up" has ever characterized the musical public. Dr. Kitchener was quite unphilosophical when he thought to reduce enjoyment and impulse to limits, by writing up at his parties—

"Come at seven,
Go at eleven."

The true reading of the latter clause was well amended into "*Go it* at eleven."

Most of us know how grave men "went it" of old at this season. In the reign of one of the Stuarts, the Lord of Misrule issued from the Temple at the head of his posse, and committed flat burglary in Fleet Street and Shire Lane; levying contributions on the inhabitants, and beating in the doors of the recusants, till the Lord Mayor, at the head of all his chivalry, came and suppressed him. We may still see the place where

"Charlemagne and all his peerage fell."

How genial is Shakspeare! We put him among musicians; for it is extremely odd, but true, that one of the best maxims in modern pianoforte playing is to be found in his sonnets. He leads us out of that "fat room" where Falstaff is to meet the jovial Sir Toby, with "boots good enough to drink in," ready to sing a catch, "Hold thy peace, thou knave." Already glorious Sir Toby calls in the most indifferent manner to Maria to bring him a stoup of wine. Now antiquaries are of opinion that this measure held about three bottles. Instead of a stoup it should be called a floorer.

Let us honor the prodigious capacities of antiquity; for almost ever since Homer's heroes sat down to a roasted ox, our basses have lost their double D. In the time of Edward the Fourth, a "wayte" who resided in the palace made nothing of a gallon of ale nightly at supper, as may be seen in the "black book" of that king's household. The ale-tap ran at all times for this min-

strel, who executed a notturno on the shawm at various chamber doors—Mistress Shore's, or Queen Elizabeth Woodville's, probably, among the rest. The old book informs us, if "he be syke, he taketh twoe loves; (like his master!)—ij messe of greate meate, one gallon ale." This man, if he had only occasional sicknesses, must have been quite as remarkable for the tone of his stomach as of his wind instrument. The night-work of our "wait" rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to ghosts and spectres, besides what of fair and frail mortality flitting through distant corridors, *en costume de nuit*, he might in his "bemused" condition mistake for such. He was certainly judicious in being well primed. Burns says that there is nothing like ale to fortify us against apparitions.

"Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;"

and Tam, when he looks at the witches' dance through the windows of auld Kirk-Alloway, has attained the height of pot-valiancy:—

"The swats sae teem'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'dna deil's a boddle."

It is useless for us to deny "the soft impeachment;" the musician *has* always been pleased with the sound of drawing corks. Handel and Mozart were, particularly. Happy is he who can put the bridle on his natural vices, and who knows when to stop. Even the Puritans made allowances for musicians. Cromwell, when he entertained himself with the bass voice of Mr. Quin at Oxford, Wood tells us, "liquored him well with sack." We know not whether it was the same Quin, who, when asked what wine he liked best, made the pleasant answer, "That of another man." After all, musicians bear no more marks of the cup of Circe on their visages than others; nor is Plutarch's speculation on drinkers—that they have their eyes set towards their noses, from a habit of looking in their glasses, peculiarly confirmed by them. They are of the old "mingled yarn," like other people. The personal history of musicians is not much stained with traits of selfish and cruel sensuality. Henry the Eighth is indeed said to have composed music; and Nero should have been alive to sing it. We like better to claim kin with Erasmus and Sir Thomas Moore—the choir boy and the pleasant musical chancellor, who loved to take a part among his choir.

We have been betrayed into a Christmas paper on minstrelsy, which the season and the annual privilege, *desipere in loco*, must excuse.

To be continued.

Full Anthem for Four voices.

Lord, let me know mine end.

DR. GREENE.

[London: J. Alfred Novello, 69, Dean Street, Soho, & 24, Poultry.]

Psalm xxxix., 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 15.

Largo.

TREBLE. Lord, let me know mine end, and the number of my days;

ALTO. Lord, let me

TENOR. (Sve. lower.) Lord, let me know mine end, and the number of my days, the

BASS. Lord,

ACCOMP. *Largo.* Gt. Diap. Ped. 8va.

that I may be certified how long I have to live, how long I have to live.

know mine end, and the number of my days; that I may be certified how long I have to live.

number of my days; that I may be certified how long, how long I have to live.

let me know mine end and the number of my days; that I may be certified how long I have to live.

Be - hold! Be - hold! thou hast made my days as it were,

Be - hold! Be - hold! thou hast made my days,

LORD, LET ME KNOW MINE END.

a span long; and mine age . . is e'en as nothing in re - spect of thee, e'en as
as it were . . a span long; and mine age . . is e'en as nothing in re - spect of thee,
Be - hold! Be - hold! thou hast made my days
Be - hold! Be - hold! thou hast made my

nothing in . . respect of thee; And verily ev'ry man liv - ing
e'en as nothing in . . respect of thee, And ve-ri-ly ev'ry man
as it were a span long, and mine age . . is e'en as nothing in re - spect of thee;
days as it were . . a span long; and mine age . . is e'en as nothing in re - spect of

is al-to-ge-ther va - ni - ty, is al - together va - ni - ty, is al - together va - ni - ty.
liv - ing is al - to - ge-ther va - ni - ty, is al - together vani-ty, al-together vani - ty.
and ve-rily ev'ry man living is al - together va - ni - ty is altogether va - ni - ty.
thee, and verily ev'ry man living is al-to-gether va-ni - ty, al - together va - ni - ty.

LORD, LET ME KNOW MINE END.

For man walketh in a vain shadow, in a vain shadow, a vain shadow, and dis-qui-et-eth him -

For man walketh, For man walketh in a vain shadow, and dis -

Swell 2 diap.

CHOIR BASS.

- self, him-self in vain; dis-qui-et-eth himself in vain, in vain.

- qui-et-eth him-self in vain; dis-qui-et-eth, dis-qui-et-eth himself in vain, in vain. He

He heapeth up, heapeth up rich-es, and cannot, can-not tell who shall

heapeth, he heapeth up riches, he heapeth up, heapeth up riches, and cannot, cannot tell who shall

ga-ther them, and can-not tell whoshall, whoshall gather them, who . . shall ga - ther them.

ga-ther them, and cannot tell, can-not tell who shall gather them, who shall ga - - ther them.

LORD, LET ME KNOW MINE END.

CHORUS.

And now, Lord, what is my hope? tru-ly my hope is ev'n in thee, my hope . . is ev'n in

And now, Lord, what is my hope? tru-ly my hope is ev'n in thee, my hope is ev'n in

And now, Lord, what is my hope? tru-ly my hope is ev'n in thee, my hope is ev'n in

And now, Lord, what is my hope? tru-ly my hope is ev'n in thee, my hope is ev'n in

CHORUS.

Gt. Diap.

Ped. 8va.

thee. Hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, O Lord, and

thee. Hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, O Lord, and with thine

thee, Hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, O Lord, and with thine ears con-

thee, Hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, hear . . my pray'r, O Lord, O Lord, and with thine ears

with thine ears con-si-der my call-ing; Hold not thy peace at my tears, hold .

ears con-si-der my call-ing. Hold not thy peace at my tears, hold . . not thy peace at my tears,

si-der, con-si-der my call-ing. Hold . not thy peace at my tears, hold not thy

con-si-der, con-si-der my call-ing. Hold not thy peace at my tears, hold . not thy

LORD, LET ME KNOW MINE END.

First system of the musical score. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with lyrics. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "not thy peace at my tears, hold not thy peace at my tears. O spare me, O spare me, hold not thy peace at my tears. O spare me, O spare me, peace at my tears, hold not thy peace at my tears. O spare me, O spare me, peace at my tears, hold not thy peace at my tears, O spare me, O spare me."

Second system of the musical score. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts with lyrics. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "spare me a lit - tle, that I may re-co-ver my strength, re - cover my strength be-fore I go spare me a lit - tle, that I may re-co-ver my strength be-fore I go spare me a lit - tle, that I may re-co-ver my strength, be-fore I go spare me a lit - tle, that I may re-co-ver my strength be-fore I go"

Third system of the musical score. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts with lyrics. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "hence, be - fore I go hence, and be no more seen, and be no more seen, no more seen. hence, be - fore I go hence, and be no more seen, and be no more, no more seen, no more seen, hence, be - fore I go hence, and be no more seen, and be no more, no more seen, no more seen. be - fore I go hence, and be no more seen, and be no more, no more seen, no more seen." The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings *pp* (pianissimo) at the beginning and end of the system.

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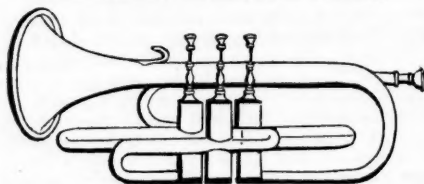
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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

In answer to inquiries, we would suggest that the best way to prepare the Musical Times for the binder, is to preserve it complete—the advertisements being amongst the most interesting records of the time. To those who suggest that we should make a separate paging for the music, we would point out the difficulty arising from odd pages—three or five, which often occur; but in that case we print advertisements to back the music, so as to leave the Brief Chronicle, &c., complete on the other sheets, for those who wish to use the music separately.

Rho. is thanked for the interesting relic by John Saville, it shall appear in an early number.

The Rev. J. H. S. The Anthem by Creighton is most welcome; our subscribers shall have it soon.

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

Dr. Greene's pathetic Anthem, "Lord let me know mine end," is given in our present number in remembrance of the lamented loss of Her late Majesty QUEEN ADELAIDE, which has occurred since our last publication. The appearance of our Tribute, at the earliest possible occasion, will doubtless prove acceptable to our subscribers.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY, EXETER HALL, Sig. Costa, Conductor.—This society will produce Mendelssohn's *Saint Paul*, on the 11th of January, and will probably repeat it. The society have chosen their time judiciously, for the repeated performances of the *Messiah*, an Oratorio with which all the members are thoroughly conversant, has enabled them to bestow all their practice evenings on the study of Mendelssohn's greatest work, the result is that *Saint Paul* will be produced, on the 11th of January, with an effect never yet attained either in England or abroad. The first performance of *Saint Paul* by this society, and which was also its first public performance in London, marked an era in the society's fortune; for then it was that they first ventured on the use of the large room for a performance, relying solely on their own resources. To those who remember that interesting evening, the performance of the 11th Jan. will offer a good opportunity of noticing the progress made since then; and not the least part of that improvement will be found amongst the regular listening members, whose pleasure from a more intimate acquaintance with the great Mendelssohn's works, we may venture to say, will be twenty-fold.

DR. MAINZER'S NORMAL MUSIC SCHOOLS.—We had the pleasure of attending, yesterday afternoon, a private rehearsal of Dr. Mainzer's pupils, which took place in his room, Newall's Buildings, before the Lord Bishop and Mayor of Manchester. The younger portion of the pupils displayed great facility in reading music at sight and also in singing some elementary pieces. The elder scholars sang selections from *Judas Maccabæus*. The Right Rev. Prelate expressed his satisfaction to Dr. Mainzer of the proficiency of the classes, particularly noticing the progress of the younger pupils. —*Manchester Examiner*.

MENDELSSOHN'S SAINT PAUL is to be performed in the Concert Hall at Manchester, on the 11th January. It is also in rehearsal for early production at Liverpool, Bristol, and Dublin.

MANCHESTER MADRIGAL SOCIETY.—This is one of the most interesting of our musical societies, from the fact of its members consisting principally of amateurs, who take part in its vocal practice. Very few professionals are among the number, and we thought we observed fewer on the present than on former occasions. As musical education spreads, let us hope that other societies founded upon the same principle may arise among us. There is no social recreation more pleasant or refining in its influences, whilst opportunities would often arise, of a public character, wherein the services of such additional force might be made most important. We hear of large masses of voices being brought together on festive occasions in Germany and France, and we find similar announcements from the choral societies recently established in London; in all of these, however, it should be understood, that the expenses of such large choirs are very considerably reduced by gratuitous service on the part of, perhaps, three-fourths of those engaged in the performance. We have scarcely yet arrived at that spirit of independence, and that true feeling for the art, in this part of the country, though we are not without a desire to make the world believe as much. The Madrigal Society demands our attention and sympathy on this ground alone, but its qualities and conduct are equally deserving of notice. Occasionally we find it gathering its members and their friends by the hill-side, or in the green meadows, and annually we have a treat presented to us similar to the one of Tuesday evening last, which we may pronounce in all respects highly creditable to those engaged, and full of promise for the future. In the book of words, each piece was introduced by a few lines having reference to the merits of the writer, the period in which he flourished, with the date of his birth and death. Among those pieces, the popularity of which was distinguished by the greatest meed of applause, we may name a manuscript composition by the able conductor, "I praised earth in beauty seen;" it displayed a beautiful solemnity in its harmonies, and a very truthful adaptation of the words,—at all times evidence of a right feeling. A short, quaint production by Converso (1575), and another one of the modern school, reached the same distinction, "Sweete flowers! ye were too faire." It is from the pen of Dr. Walmisley, Professor of Music in the University of Cambridge; a gentleman whose very superior attainments are well known in the musical world. Many of his father's glees will be familiar to our readers as among the favourites of our glee clubs. The present composition is full of elegant thought, and a clever imitation of the quaint style of the old madrigalians. It certainly taxed the powers of the choir, but was admirably given, and proved most effective. The attendance was very numerous, and the gratification seemed general;—to those who take an interest in this class of music, we can scarcely imagine a more delightful evening. —*Manchester Examiner*.

MUSIC AT MANCHESTER.—Since the visit of Miss Hayes and party, we have been tolerably quiet here in musical matters. I must, however, except the Monday evening concerts, which, in thirteen weeks, have been attended by at least fifty thousand persons; this is cheering, when we know that among these vast multitudes are to be found those who had been accustomed to spend their evenings in dissipation at the tavern music saloons, with its coarse and obscene

BRIEF CHRONICLE (continued).

ballads. The moral effect of these truly monster musical gatherings is beyond calculating—we can there see the clean-washed factory operatives side by side with the more fortunate merchant; in fine, we have met pastors, magistrates, members of Parliament, men distinguished alike in every branch of learning and science, who have, with one heart and one soul, applauded at these elevating musical meetings. For this boon we are mainly indebted to the enterprise and discernment of Mr. H. B. Peacock, who has done, and is now doing more for the progress of the musical art, than any other body of gentlemen in this neighbourhood. It is under this gentleman's superior guidance that these weekly concerts have been found to eschew everything that could possibly pander to a vitiated taste. The staple commodity is glee, chorus, and ballad, judiciously culled from the works of our best British authors, and often embodying some good nautical sentiment. These secular entertainments are frequently varied by oratorios; and you will be glad to learn that our friend Jackson's *Deliverance* is now in course of rehearsal, and will soon be brought out. Every praise is due to the talented *chef* of the orchestra, Mr. Banks, for the interest he is taking to render justice to this talented production of the modest Yorkshireman. I may just name that Mr. Jackson's fine Glee, *Sisters of the Glen*, was received most rapturously at these concerts a week ago; to-night we have a "Night with Bishop;" to-morrow (Christmas Day) *Judas Maccabæus* is to be given, with Mr. Sims Reeves and party as principals. A regular *cram* is expected, as our country friends flock in large numbers to this annual performance of Oratorio, and on which occasion we have frequently been gratified by beholding these earnest worshippers at the shrine of genius, with their unique copy of the work performed placed before them, and following most intently each successive piece, at times giving vent to their enthusiasm in a manner that would, we are sure, disturb the equanimity of the aristocratic *habitués* of the Hanover-square Rooms.—*From a Correspondent.*

CLAPHAM.—We are glad to hear that a good beginning was made on the 13th of December, when the first of a series of concerts was given in the presence of the Rector, the Rev. Wentworth Bowyer, and other distinguished inhabitants of the neighbourhood. In addition to some good solo and concerted vocal music, in which Miss Rainforth, Messrs. F. Bodda, Leffler, &c. &c., took part, there was some instrumental music of a superior order, executed by Mr. Dando, Mr. Williams, Mr. T. Hill, and the conductor of the concerts, Mr. J. G. Boardman. We also learn that the Clapham Choral Society, and several elementary classes, have their regular weekly meetings in the same vicinity.

MUSICAL REHEARSAL.—On the 11th December, the members of the Newcastle and Gateshead Temperance Choral Society gave their first public rehearsal in the Victoria Room, Grey-street, Newcastle, to a numerous and highly respectable audience. The music, consisting of songs, duetts, trios, glees, and choruses (the latter sustained by above thirty singers), was sung with great effect, under the efficient direction of Mr. James Pyburn, the leader of the society, almost every piece being encored.*—*From a Correspondent.*—[* A custom which we have always considered highly objectionable on many accounts, and which should not be made a test of merit.—Ed. M.T.]

DUNDEE.—We see by the *Northern Warden*, that Handel, Haydn, Rossini, Mozart, Bellini, and other composers, are beginning to be introduced to the knowledge of a northern public by means of the Dundee Choral Society, who gave specimens of all these composers' works on the 12th December. The performers were local—a good sign,—and the prices, at which the public were admitted, almost nominal. The large attendance gave assurance of the public interest it excited.

ST. MARTIN'S HALL, LONG ACRE, will be officially opened about the middle of January, when several entertainments of a more or less public nature will be given. The Choruses of one of Mozart's great but less known Operas, *Idomeneo*, and a festival Anthem, to words from the 68th Psalm, by an English composer, H. Leslie, Esq., will be amongst the novelties.

CONCERTS FOR JANUARY.—Mr. John Parry's on 5th, Mr. Allcroft's on 14th, Mr. A. Billet's on 15th and 29th.

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